

High Level Closure Event for the National Action Against Childhood Obesity

Political Commitment.
Collective Action.
Healthier Generations.

Turning the Tide on a Global Health Crisis

25 May 2026,
Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center,
Athens, Greece

Event Agenda



FOR CHILDREN, WE BECOME A SHIELD.

national action
against
childhood
obesity



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Health

unicef 
for every child

Greece 2.0
NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

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Time	Session	Indicative Description	Speaker / Contributor	Affiliation / Country	Language
09:00–09:45	Registration & Arrival	Arrival, networking and media check-in	—	—	
09:45–10:45	Official Remarks	<i>Opening of the High-Level Event</i>	<i>Apostolos Mangiriadis</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	GR
		Presentation of programme impact and results	Video	National Action Against Childhood Obesity	EN subtitles
		Strategic significance and legacy of the National Action	Eirini Agapidaki	Alternate Minister of Health, Greece	GR
		UNICEF perspectives on the National Action and global work	Ghassan Khalil	UNICEF Representative in Greece	EN
		National policy perspectives and lessons learned	Ana Paula Martins	Minister of Health, Portugal	EN
		Global call to action on childhood obesity prevention	Pau Gasol	UNICEF Global Champion for Nutrition and Zero Childhood Obesity	GR subtitles
10:45–11:00	Opening Keynote	Childhood obesity as a global health and child rights challenge	Joan Matji	UNICEF Global Director, Nutrition	EN/online
11:00–11:45	Session 1: Global and EU Perspectives	Childhood obesity challenges and solutions in Europe and beyond	João Breda	Head, WHO Athens Quality of Care and Patient Safety Office, Division of Prevention and Health Promotion, Officer in Charge and Special Representative, WHO Greece	EN
		Government perspectives on prevention and child health	Sir Ilano Almeida Barreto e Silva	Deputy Secretary, Secretariat for Primary Health Care, Brazil	EN
		Government perspectives on prevention and child health	Eugena Tomini	Deputy Minister of Health, Albania	EN
		Nutrition policy and public health approaches	Eliza Markidou	Scientist, Researcher, Senior Clinical Dietitian, Head of Nutrition Department SH, Cyprus	EN
		Health systems and prevention policies	Cristina Tamazlićar	Senior Consultant, Maternal and Child Health Service; Ministry of Health, Moldova	EN
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Anna Rito</i>	<i>Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nutrition and Childhood Obesity, INSA, Portugal</i>	EN
11:45–12:00	Keynote	Translating evidence into policy and practice and strengthening global cooperation	Bai Li	Member, Policy and Prevention Committee, World Obesity Federation Director, MSc Global Health Policy, University of Bristol, UK Lifelong Professor of Global Health Policy Appointed by University Chancellor, Guangxi Medical University, P.R. China	EN/online
12:00–12:30	Fireside Conversation: Rethinking Childhood Obesity Prevention Through Systems, Behaviour and Evidence		Niyati Parekh	Associate Vice Provost, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, School of Global Public Health, New York University, USA	EN
			Jill Landsbaugh Kaar	Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine Anschutz, University of Colorado, USA	EN
			Lee M. Sanders, MD	Professor, Pediatrics and Health Policy Chief, Division of General Pediatrics, Stanford University, USA	EN

			Paulina Nowicka	Professor (Chair), Department of Food Studies, Nutrition and Dietetics, Uppsala University, Sweden Associate Professor, Department of Clinical Sciences, Technology and Interventions (CLINTEC), Karolinska Institutet, Sweden Co-Chair, EASO Childhood Obesity Working Group	EN
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Olga Siokou-Siova</i>	<i>Head, Communication and Advocacy Section, UNICEF Greece</i>	EN
12:30–12:45	Coffee Break	Networking	—	—	—
12:45–13:30	Session 2: Sustainability Through Academia & Public Systems	European Centre for Combating Childhood Obesity and systems sustainability	Ioannis Manios	Professor, Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, School of Health Science & Education, Harokopio University, Greece Director, European Center for Combating Obesity	GR
		Teleconsultation services and family support	Iakovina Sergi	Teleconsultation Dietitian, Greece	GR
		Pediatric systems and clinical implementation	Kiriaki Tsiroukidou, MD	Pediatric Endocrinologist, Pediatric Diabetologist Director of the National Pediatric Endocrinology Unit, 3rd Pediatrics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece	GR
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Eleni Chronopoulou</i>	<i>Programme Officer, UNICEF Greece</i>	GR
13:30–13:45			Phillip Baker	Associate Professor, Australian Research Council (ARC) Future Fellow, Sydney Horizon Fellow, School of Public Health, University of Sydney, Australia	EN/online
		<i>Wrap Up of First Part of Event</i>	<i>Apostolos Mangiriadis</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	
13:45–14:45	Lunch Break	Networking Lunch	—	—	—
		<i>Welcome and Introduction of Second Part of Event</i>	<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	
14:45–15:30	Session 3: Schools, Educators & Communities	Schools and universities as prevention environments	Yannis Tountas	Director, Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine & Professor of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Athens, Greece	GR
		School-level implementation and dissemination	Georgia (Giouli) Gyftoula	Educator, 3rd Primary School of Zografou, Athens, Greece	GR
		Community food support initiatives	Alexandros Theodoridis	Co-funder, MPOROUME, Saving Food – Saving Lives, Greece	GR
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	GR
15:30–15:50	Keynote	Whole Health for Every Young Person: Reimagining Childhood Obesity Through Mind, Body, and Community	Jill Landsbaugh Kaar	Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine Anschutz, University of Colorado, USA	EN
15:50–16:15	Fireside Conversation: Brain Health & Wellbeing	Childhood obesity, cognition and brain connectivity	Magdalini Krommyda, MD	Neuroscientist, Greece	GR
		Mental health and wellbeing as foundations for healthier childhoods	Jennifer Hall	Technical Officer, Mental Health, WHO Athens Quality of Care and Patient Safety Office, WHO EURO Mental Health and Well-being team, WHO Greece	EN
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	
16:15–16:30	Session 4: Sport as a way of life	Healthy Hoops4All - Results and milestones	Harris Spiliakos	Chief Programs Officer, Hellenic Basketball Federation, Greece	GR
16:30–16:50	Fireside	Physical activity and healthy lifestyles	Vaggelis Liolios	President, Hellenic Basketball Federation, Greece	GR

	Physical activity and healthy lifestyles	Sport, motivation and inclusion	Eleanna Christinaki	International Basketball Player,	GR
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	GR
16:50–17:10	Keynote	Child-centred and family-based obesity prevention approaches	Paulina Nowicka	Professor (Chair), Department of Food Studies, Nutrition and Dietetics, Uppsala University, Sweden Associate Professor, Department of Clinical Sciences, Technology and Interventions (CLINTEC), Karolinska Institutet, Sweden Co-Chair, EASO Childhood Obesity Working Group	EN
17:10–17:30	Coffee Break	Networking	—	—	—
17:30–17:50	Keynote	Commercial determinants of health and implications for children	Niyati Parekh	Associate Vice Provost, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, School of Global Public Health, New York University, USA	EN
17:50–18:10	Keynote	Translating Evidence into Sustainable Childhood Obesity Prevention at National Level	Lee M. Sanders, MD	Professor, Pediatrics and Health Policy Chief, Division of General Pediatrics, Stanford University, USA	EN
18:10–19:00	Session 5: Sustainability, Reflections and the Road Ahead	National Nutrition Recommendations and the next day	Androniki Naska	Professor, School of Medicine, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece Chair, Scientific Committee, National Action Against Childhood Obesity	GR
		Sustainability of interventions of the National Action and the benefits of digital tools	Emmanuela Magriplis	Associate Professor, Nutritional Epidemiology & Public Health Laboratory of Dietetics & Quality of Life, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece	GR
		Shakur Abdishakur Abdulle	Associate Research Professor, Senior Research Scientist, Associate Director, Co-Principal Investigator, Public Health Research Center, NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE	EN	
		<i>Session moderation (Global nutrition and child development perspectives)</i>	<i>Karan Courtney Haag</i>	<i>Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF Center of Excellence, HQ</i>	EN
19:00–19:15	Closing Remarks	Childhood Obesity, a global health crisis	Simon Barquera, MD	President, World Obesity Federation Director, Center for Research in Nutrition and Health, National Institute of Public Health (INSP), Mexico	EN/online
19:15–19:30	Youth Declaration Presentation	Youth Declaration on Childhood Obesity Presentation	Vivian Dendrinou Electra Karamousli Theodora Kosmopoulou Chrysoula Papadopoulou	UNICEF Child and Youth Advisory Board Members	GR
19:30–19:50	Fireside Conversation	Major milestones of public health prevention in Greece and a child-centered public health agenda	Eirini Agapidaki	Alternate Minister of Health	GR
		<i>Session moderation</i>	<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	GR
19:50–20:00	<i>Reflections and Official Closing of the High-Level Event</i>		<i>Sia Kossioni</i>	<i>Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host</i>	GR
20:00–22:00	Evening Reception	Networking and visibility	All Participants	—	—

Event Hosts

Apostolos Mangiriadis

Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host

Sia Kossioni

Journalist, News Anchor, Event Host

Speakers

Eirini Agapidaki

Alternate Minister of Health, Greece

Ghassan Khalil

UNICEF Representative in Greece

Ana Paula Martins

Minister of Health, Portugal

Pau Gasol

UNICEF Global Champion for Nutrition and Zero Childhood Obesity

Joan Matji

UNICEF Global Director, Nutrition

João Breda

Head, WHO Athens Quality of Care and Patient Safety Office, Division of Prevention and Health Promotion, Officer in Charge and Special Representative, WHO Greece

Sir Ilano Almeida Barreto e Silva

Deputy Secretary, Secretariat for Primary Health Care, Brazil

Eugena Tomini

Deputy Minister of Health, Albania

Eliza Markidou

Scientist, Researcher, Senior Clinical Dietitian, Head of Nutrition Department SH, Cyprus

Cristina Tamazliar

Senior Consultant, Maternal and Child Health Service; Ministry of Health, Moldova

Anna Rito

Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nutrition and Childhood Obesity, INSA, Portugal

Bai Li

Member, Policy and Prevention Committee, World Obesity Federation
Director, MSc Global Health Policy, University of Bristol, UK
Lifelong Professor of Global Health Policy Appointed by University Chancellor, Guangxi Medical University, P.R. China

Niyati Parekh

Associate Vice Provost, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, School of Global Public Health, New York University, USA

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Co-Chair, EASO Childhood Obesity Working Group

Olga Siokou-Siova

Head, Communication and Advocacy Section, UNICEF Greece

Ioannis Manios

Professor, Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, School of Health Science & Education, Harokopio University, Greece

Director, European Center for Combating Obesity

Iakovina Sergi

Teleconsultation Dietitian, Greece

Kiriaki Tsiroukidou, MD

Pediatric Endocrinologist, Pediatric Diabetologist
Director of the National Pediatric Endocrinology Unit, 3rd Pediatrics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

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Co-funder,
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International Basketball Player,
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Health,
New York University, USA

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Chief, Division of General Pediatrics,
Stanford University, USA

Androniki Naska

Professor,
School of Medicine,
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
Chair, Scientific Committee,
National Action Against Childhood Obesity

Emmanuela Magriplis

Associate Professor,
Nutritional Epidemiology & Public Health
Laboratory of Dietetics & Quality of Life,
Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition,
Agricultural University of Athens, Greece

Shakur Abdishakur Abdulle

Associate Research Professor,
Senior Research Scientist, Associate Director , Co-Principal
Investigator,
Public Health Research Center,
NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE

Karan Courtney Haag

Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF Center of Excellence, HQ

Simon Barquera, MD

President, World Obesity Federation
Director, Center for Research in Nutrition and Health, National
Institute of Public Health (INSP), Mexico

Vivian Dendrinou , Electra Karamousli, Theodora

Kosmopoulou , Chrysoula Papadopoulou
UNICEF Child and Youth Advisory Board Members



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